



Linda S. Adams
Secretary for
Environmental
Protection

NEWS RELEASE

California Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Valley Region

11020 Sun Center Drive #200, Rancho Cordova, California 95670-6114
Phone (916) 464-3291 • FAX (916) 464-4645
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley>



Arnold
Schwarzenegger
Governor

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Contact: Joseph Mello, CHG
Phone: (916) 464-4661

CENTRAL VALLEY WATER BOARD EXECUTIVE OFFICER ISSUES CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ORDER TO NEWCASTLE HOMEOWNER IN PLACER COUNTY

SACRAMENTO - The Central Valley Water Board's Executive Officer has issued a Cleanup and Abatement Order to Zane and Catherine Schaeffer for the illegal filling and grading of a stream and riparian area on their Taylor Road property in Newcastle, Placer County in June 2009. The work resulted in the disturbance of wetlands that are deeded as a protected riparian area, and was done without any of the necessary permits. The landowners had been warned by Placer County in 2005 not to disturb this area of their property without permits. The Cleanup and Abatement Order requires the landowners to abate further damages to the wetlands and to restore them to their original (or better) condition by October 31, 2009. They will also be required to hire qualified professionals to help with and verify the restoration.

In addition to disturbing the protected riparian areas on the Taylor Road property, these activities have impacted Red Ravine, a tributary to Secret Ravine and Dry Creek. Earthen materials within the drainage immediately impacted sensitive wetland habitat and threatens to migrate downstream, further impacting drainage courses. Discharges of sediment can bury fish spawning habitat and reduce the carrying capacity of rivers and streams.

"Owners of property that contain wetlands must be aware of the damage, some of it irreversible; they can do to these very valuable and protected water bodies during construction projects on their properties. Property owners must comply with all applicable state and federal laws that are intended to protect our wetlands. Property owners must obtain the necessary permits before any work is done in these areas, and I strongly encourage them to contact the appropriate regulatory agencies to ensure they have fully complied with our laws and regulations before starting any construction project," said Pamela Creedon, Executive Officer of the Central Valley Water Board.

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's mission is to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources, and to ensure their proper allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations.

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